

Another German Dream Shattered—Mittelafrika

The Aim of the Junkers Was a Huge Colonial Empire in the Dark Continent

By Frank H. Simonds

THE attention of the world has been so concentrated upon European aspects of the Treaty of Versailles that the provisions of this document affecting Africa have provoked relatively little comment, yet, in point of fact, it is not impossible that the African detail is of more importance for the future than all the territorial changes, so far as Germany herself is concerned, on the European map.

When the war came Germany had constructed on African soil an empire of more than a million square miles, five times the area of the German Empire in Europe, with a population of nearly thirteen millions. Nor did German ambition pause at what had been accomplished. Her two great colonies of tropical Africa, the Kamerun and German East Africa, were to be foundation stones in a grandiose edifice which was to span the Dark Continent. If there was to be a Mittelafrika as a result of the victories of German arms on the European frontiers, there was just as surely to be a Mittelafrika, crossing the African Continent from the Atlantic to the Eastern Ocean, and, in addition, German Southwest Africa was to advance northward to join this central territory, while it also extended southward to include the Union of South Africa.

Germans Coveted Great Congo Colony

In German calculation Belgium was to surrender her Congo. Did not Bernhardi, long before the war, in his memorable volume suggest that the mere possession of this colony might deprive Belgium of her neutrality? France, already forced to yield half of her Congo as "compensation" for her Moroccan acquisitions, was to complete the surrender of this great colony. These French and Belgian cessions would unite the Kamerun with German East Africa. Moreover, the Germans had constructed a railroad from the Indian Ocean to Lake Tanganyika, which was to be the backbone of this ocean-to-ocean empire.

But this was only one of the German dreams. When the war came and Turkey joined the Kaiser then the Germans promised to the Sultan the return of his rights in Egypt. Britain was to be evicted, Turkey was nominally to come back, but actually Germany was to succeed the British. In this region, too, German supremacy was to be assured beyond the challenge of sea power by pushing a branch of the Baghdad railway southward from Aleppo. A new railroad, borrowing existing lines as far as the edge of the desert, was to extend across the Suez Canal, joining Cairo and Alexandria with Damascus and Aleppo, and thus with Constantinople and Berlin.

And, once in Egypt, Germany dreamed of following the example of the Arabs and sweeping westward on the Mediterranean shore until she reached Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria and Morocco, borrowing the mantle of the Prophet to cover the ambitions of the Hohenzollerns.

All of Africa In German Dream

In the German mind Africa, with relatively small exceptions, was to be German territory; French, Belgian, Italian and Portuguese colonies were to be seized, and Germany was to acquire an inexhaustible reservoir of men for future wars and of raw materials for future trade conflicts.

Looking backward now over more than a quarter of a century one can see how Germany has treasured and fostered the African dream. One can also see the successive disappointments. When Britain conquered the Boer republics all Germany felt a sense of resentment, revealed in the Kaiser's message to Kruger, since one of the chosen fields of German expansion was thus preempted. When France finally began to occupy Morocco, after her great bargain with Britain, following the Fashoda crisis, German resentment was disclosed in three separate attempts to block the absorption of the last remaining fields open for German expansion.

And now Germany loses not alone the dreams for the future, but the reality of the moment when the war came. By the treaty of peace she is deprived of every foot of her African holdings. More than this, to make assurance doubly sure, she is compelled to surrender such claims as she had upon France for equal opportunities in Morocco, claims based upon the successful maneuvering of her diplomats at Algiers and afterward, during the Moroccan clashes, while Britain acquires, with

the consent of the world, the United States expressly assenting, a protectorate in Egypt, which gives her that free hand she has lacked hitherto.

Africa Closed to Germans by Treaty

Henceforth, then, Africa is closed to the German. He renounces his claims in Morocco—commercial claims, not territorial—although he has always cherished the hope, expressed in the Agadir time quite forcibly, of transforming them into territorial claims. He signs away his position in Egypt. He renounces his agreement with Britain by which, when Portugal consented to part with her African estates, Germany was to acquire a large fraction. As France was compelled to retire from America after Montcalm had lost Quebec, Germany is now to leave Africa.

But the elimination of Germany is only one of the African changes which will follow the present settlement. Actually Germany cedes her colonies to the Allies, not to any one nation. But the Allies have already sketched the ultimate division of these territories in secret understandings and treaties. Thus France is to recover all of her lost Congo lands, ceded to Germany in the Agadir time, and all of German Kamerun, save a narrow strip along the frontier of British Nigeria. Ports, railways, German investments and improvements of all sorts, pass to France, with a good harbor into the bargain.

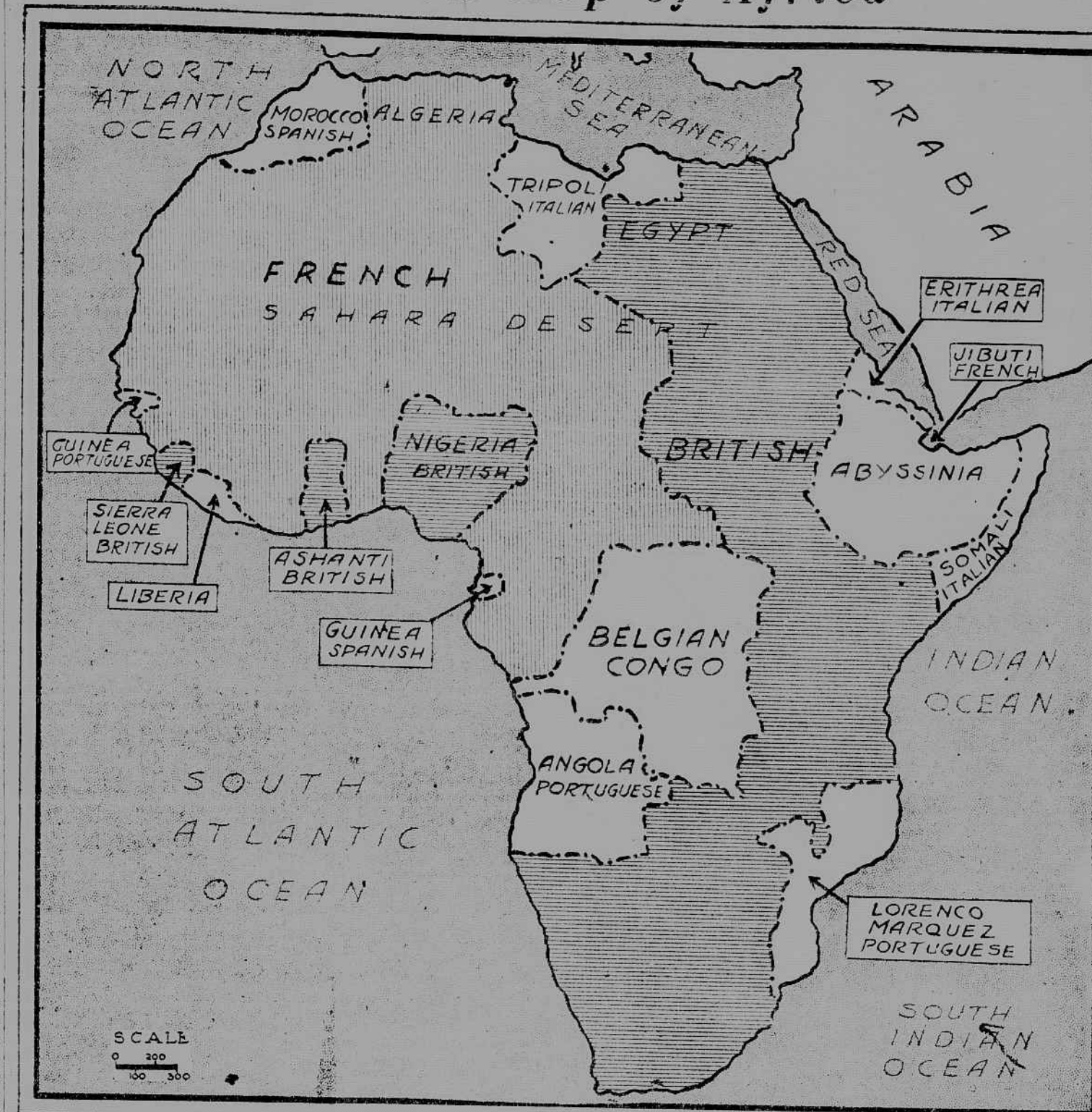
In addition Togo is divided between France and Britain, insuring to France a material extension of the narrow coastline of Dahomey and a valuable railroad into the hinterland. Finally, all the Allies have agreed that France may, if she can, acquire from Spain the Spanish holdings on the coast of Morocco facing Algiers and fronting on the Strait of Gibraltar.

France Can Suppress Annoying Spanish Strip

This means, in fact, that France has the consent of the world to suppress the annoying and even dangerous Spanish strip in Morocco, thus completing her Moroccan acquisitions, provided she can bring Spain to an agreement.

For France, then, the new partition of Africa means the realization of the aspirations of nearly a century and the elimination of the German peril in Africa, as well as in Europe. By the Agadir maneuver Germany thrusts a wedge between French Congo lands and those about Lake Chad. By the successive Moroccan affairs Germany hampered and restricted French domination in the Shereefian Empire. But now French territory extends uninterrupted from the Bay of Algiers to

The New Map of Africa



The Horizontal Shading British Territory; the Vertical Shading Is French

the banks of the lower Congo, and at no distant date we may see the French flag flying from the Tripoli frontier to the southern Pillar of Hercules.

In thus clearing her hands in Morocco France acquires one of the great colonial prizes of the world, a vast reservoir of troops, a vast fertile land, with great mineral resources, and she rounds off her north African empire. By obtaining her lost territories along the Congo and the Ubanghi, and, in addition, the German Kamerun, she acquires a great tropical estate at the moment when all the world is at last appreciating the enormous value of tropical colonies.

French rule thus seems firmly established in northwest and west Africa. Already in the recent war France drew from these lands more than half a million fighting men, in

addition to several hundred thousand laborers.

In Algiers and Tunis a million Europeans have already settled, and Latin civilization has already been restored over vast regions. On French Africa Germany has always looked with covetous eyes. It will be recalled that German statesmen declined to give the pledge demanded by Sir Edward Grey, when the world war was breaking, that they would respect the integrity of French colonial territory if Britain stayed out of the war and France was beaten. Now there is an end of the German menace, the perpetual demand for "compensation," the innumerable "incidents" and crises, by which Germany preserved at home and abroad the legend that she had claims upon her neighbors' colonies because she was stronger than they were.

Belgium, like France, escapes from the same peril. Belgian Congo has always been the object of German scheming. Bounded by German territory alike on the east and the west, after Germany had pushed her tentacles eastward to the Banghi, in the Agadir time, Belgium could see the steady advance of German strategic railroads, approaching her African estates, as they pushed up to her European frontiers, for the same military purpose. And when Belgium had been conquered no German even considered the possibility that the Belgian Congo would be returned to its owners. Now, with Britain and France as neighbors, Belgium can rest secure in Africa, while in Europe too she has found new guarantees against German aggression.

Great, however, as have been French gains in Africa, it is Britain

who makes the real profit. Two-thirds of the German colonial territory falls to her. In addition to half of the Togo and a relatively small slice of the Kamerun, she acquires all of German East Africa and of German Southwest Africa. The dream of Cecil Rhodes is thus realized, and the "all red" strip of British territory extends without interruption from the Cape to Cairo. While the German base of intrigue, propaganda and maneuver in South-west Africa is abolished, the eastern half of the great African continent is henceforth British, and the Cape-to-Cairo railway can march on British territory from one end of Africa to the other.

German's Ambition Caused His Downfall

Criticism of this vast British gain as representing an imperialistic

England and France Get a Large Share of African Territory by the Treaty

spirit is, moreover, totally unwarranted. During all the years that Germany was building up her African empire, Britain viewed German acquisitions without jealousy. Germany's right to colonies was never questioned, and in the case of the Portuguese colonies Britain agreed that when at last, as was inevitable, Portugal was compelled to sell them the larger part should go to Germany. Even in the case of the Kamerun, Britain was willing Germany should obtain from France compensation on the Ubanghi for French gains in Morocco, provided only German greed should not impose impossible concessions.

The German has himself solely to blame for the fact that in the end he has lost his whole African empire. Neither the French nor the British sought to extend their domains at his expense. Neither conceived nor nourished grandiose schemes for creating a still vaster African empire by annexing German lands. Rivalry there was between the German and the Briton, between the Frenchman and the Briton—competition—which in the case of France and Britain led to tense moments and acute crises. But both Britain and France recognized German right to a place in the African sun.

By contrast the German regarded his own considerable holdings as important solely as bases for the acquisition of the lands of his neighbors. He was constructing maps and plans, inspiring rebellions and disorders in British and French territories alike. The same spirit that was revealed in Pan-Germanism in Europe was disclosed in the whole African chapter of German history. And in the end self-preservation demanded that the French and the British should make an end to the intolerable conditions incident to German conduct in Africa.

Germany Brutal In Colonization

Nor can one fail to take note of the methods of German colonization. In modern history there is no page more soiled. In German Southwest Africa almost the entire native population was exterminated, after a war provoked by German brutality conducted in the manner later used in Europe. To the very last in all of her colonies Germany continued to employ methods which make the history of the campaigns which ended in the occupation of her colonies by French, British, Belgian and Portuguese troops a record of almost unexampled horrors.

It remains to mention Italian gains in Africa. At the moment when she entered the war Italy held Tripoli, acquired as a result of her still recent conflict with Turkey, Eritrea, that thin strip of coast land between Abyssinia and the Red Sea, and a more considerable area in Somaliland. But in the case of

hinterland, including the caravan route between Ghat and Ghadames, while both France and Britain held territories adjoining Italy's eastern colonies.

By the terms of a secret agreement between Italy, France and Britain it was provided that Italy should receive compensation if her partners increased their African holdings. This promise has led to many debates in the Paris Conference, and certain modifications of frontiers have been foreshadowed, although these fall far short of satisfying Italian expectations.

From France Italy is to receive the territory necessary to make her complete master of the Ghadames-Ghat caravan route; from Britain she is to receive certain lands on the border between Egypt and Tripoli, and both France and Britain are prepared to make concessions on the Red Sea and Somaliland. But Italy is asking for French Jibuti, the port at the entrance of the Red Sea, the starting place of the railroad which goes back into Abyssinia, and this the French decline to cede.

Extinction of Spanish Rule Foreshadowed

As for Spain, the Versailles document unmistakably foreshadows the ultimate extinction of Spanish rule in the insignificant strip of Moroccan soil, which is all that survives of four centuries of Spanish effort on the south shore of the Mediterranean. And in this strip Spanish armies are now, as always, closely besieged behind the walls of their fortified towns, while the cost of the venture in men and money annually increases.

To extinguish Spanish rule France would pay liberally, but Spanish pride prevents such a transaction. The fact that Tangier, which was a naturalized town and zone, and Spanish Morocco were used by the Germans as bases for raising the natives in the French region, the fact that disorder in Spanish Morocco leads to disturbances in the French districts, make it almost imperative that France should complete her North African empire by the acquisition of the Spanish zone and of Tangier.

Beyond question we shall see many changes in the map of Africa in the next few years, exchanges of territory between France and Britain, perhaps the cession by the French of the tiny fraction of their old Indian empire in return for British cessions in Gambia and elsewhere along the West Coast. Spanish Africa and Portuguese Africa will disappear, not by war, but by purchase, since in both instances the present owners are incapable of developing their colonies, and in their hands they interfere with the necessary development of French and British colonies.

In the larger sense the Treaty of Versailles divides Africa between the French and the British, although it assigns a relatively insignificant part to Italy and confirms Belgium in the occupation of a vast central area. Only Abyssinia remains independent, and in the nature of things it will become more and more a dependency of the British, since British and Abyssinian frontiers march for so many miles. Mittelafrika, like Mittelafrika, disappears from the calculations of statesmen and Africa, like the Americas, become closed territory to colonial adventures and international rivalries.

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The Jews of Poland Again Protest Against Pogroms

The following is a protest against the pogroms in Poland in recent months, addressed to President Paderewski by the Jewish deputies of the Polish Diet. The letter is dated May 22:

"MR. PRESIDENT: As it is impossible for us to address you in the form of a parliamentary interpellation, the rule demanding that such an interpellation bear fifteen signatures (there are only nine Jewish deputies in the Diet), we find ourselves obliged to send you the following letter:

"After you took over the government of the country in your hands you solemnly declared that the Jewish population of Poland would enjoy equality of rights and would be able, as all other citizens, to count upon protection from the law.

"This formula has, of course, not given satisfaction to aspirations for a national minority. But we had hoped that after the terrible days of Kielce and of Lemberg, after the series of pogroms which have taken place in the villages and towns of western Galicia, the life and property of Jews finally will be secure.

Pogroms in Whole Series of Villages

"Our hopes have not been realized. The dark forces, which for the moment have suspended their criminal activities, have gone back

to their work with accumulated determination. The certainty has been established that there exists an organization which has for its object to excite the masses of the population against the Jews and which systematically arranges the pogroms and excesses against the Jewish population which are becoming more and more frequent.

"About the middle of March, as if in response to a given signal, pogroms have broken out in Kalisz, Busk, Szydlow, Stopnicz and in a whole series of villages in the provinces of Kalisz and Kielce. In the month of May pogroms had taken place in Lublin, Mieschow, Slomniki and Kosch. At the identical time a Polish army made pogroms in central Galicia upon the following towns: Rzeszow, Kolbuszowa and a whole series of villages in the environs of Strzyzow. With few rare exceptions, the authorities did not come to the aid of the Jews. The military authorities, to be sure, did not refuse to intervene, but up to the present their activities have brought no results. (The investigation into the Kielce pogroms furnishes a striking example.) And even when investigation is carried on energetically the authorities content themselves with delivering up to the bar those who executed the second order, but do not make the slightest effort to disclose the organization which directed the pogrom action.

"In the army and in the administration the persecution of the Jew is openly urged. Placards were posted in the streets in which Jews are threatened with excesses because

Polish diplomacy has not been crowned with success. These placards remained on the walls during the course of half a day, and the gendarmes arrested persons tearing these placards down. Under the pretext of carrying on a war against monopoly searches are made exclusively among the Jews in Lodz, Loukow, Kosch and in a number of other cities. These searches almost never disclose secret stocks, but they end, in revenge, in the disappearance of money and of jewels belonging to the persons who are searched. Also they take away the food that these families have for their personal needs.

Synagogues Are Profaned in Hunt

"These searches are carried out also under the pretext of searching for arms. Naturally one finds no arms, but the occasion is made use of to profane synagogues without heed for the religious sentiments of the Jews. At the same time these searches carefully avoid the homes and the stores of Christians. No passing Christian is submitted to searches, and it is this which creates the impression that only the Jews speculate and that only they hide arms.

"In Lithuania the persecutions of Jews take an extremely terrible turn. In Pinsk thirty-five Jews have been shot without any kind of a trial under the pretext that they were Bolsheviks. The same thing has happened in Vilna, in Lida and in Poryck. We find ourselves in the presence of analogous events, though in a form which is less atrocious, in Volkovisk and in Proujany. The

Jewish population of Lithuania, which has looked forward to being freed by the Poles from the Bolsheviks is plunged in deception and in terror.

"Of late the government seeks to put an end to the excesses against the Jews in western Galicia and in Lithuania. The policy of half-measures, the care with which one avoids descending to the root of the evil, the immunity which those who cause all this trouble enjoy—these are the things that cause pogroms to spring up constantly in new regions and to take different forms.

Say Mob Spirit Overrides Law

"Every move of soldiers about the country leaves traces of Jewish blood and tears. The legionaries from Posen arrived in Warsaw and for two days Jews were beaten in the streets on the pretext that a Jewish restaurateur had sold alcohol to burn one of the legionaries. The idea that there exist law courts which can punish the accused Jew is completely obliterated by the mob spirit.

"All the Jews must expiate the guilt of one of them. The soldiers of Haller arrived, and at once there broke out anti-Jewish pogroms in Novi-Dvor, Zakroczyn Kolohn and in other places. In depots and trains Jews are whipped and tortured. On May 12 at the Kovel station in War saw a veritable battle was organized against the Jews. As a climax of this battle the outrages took a new turn, that of cutting the beards of the Jews. After their parading through the city the recruits

whipped the Jews and extorted money from them by means of all sorts of tortures.

"All these crimes pass under the eyes of the authorities and remain unpunished. The Christian masses feel convinced that an attempt on the life, the person or property of the Jew will not incur any punishment.

"It is true that the authorities address themselves to the populace and threaten with measures of repression. But at the same time the authorities spread circulars and communiques which exonerate the authors of these crimes and throw the guilt for them back upon the Jews. The same tactics are employed by the magistrates, by municipal councils, and even by certain factions in the Diet. In this matter all records have been broken by the semi-official telegraphic agency.

Distorted News Incites Pogroms

"But its colored news from abroad and inside the country, as bearing upon Jews in general and upon certain Jewish parties in particular, this agency has carried on a systematic campaign against the Jews. It misleads public opinion and prepares pogroms.

"The Christian population interprets the appeal of the authorities as a formality which pledges nothing. Is it to be wondered, therefore, that the elementary notions of right are not applied to the Jews; that after a Jew is accused of a crime, real or imaginary, there is at once organized a lynching, not only against the accused, but against all the Jews collectively?

"The Polish press almost urges the mob against the Jews by publishing false news and by accusing the Jews of crimes they have not committed, but the authorities do not believe it necessary to interfere with it. At the same time the Jewish newspaper cannot publish an item about the excesses committed upon the Jewish population without exposing itself to persecution. In place of the isolated pogroms of other times, Poland to-day has become the theatre of one continuous pogrom which goes from one village to the next.

"This putting of Jews outside of the law has a demoralizing effect upon the soldiers and upon the Christian population, who little by little lose all sentiment of right. The logical consequence is disorder and anarchy.

"Mr. President, on the strength of your formal promise on the subject of the rights and equality of Jews, we expect from you a clear and precise answer. We wish to know if you have the intention to take measures, and, if so, what will these measures be, to put an end to the acts of violence and of illegal persecution of which Judaism of Poland is the object.

"We wish also to state that we are prepared to give proofs to support every one of the acts cited.

THE FREE UNION OF JEWISH DEPUTIES.

Signed: HARTGLASS, GREENBAUM, Dr. THON, ROSENBLAT, WEINZIEHER, PERLMUTTER, HALPERN, PRILUCKI, HIRSCH-BORN."

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